To the Rev Mr Wicks of Walsham

41

Dr. *Cotton Mather's*

SERMON,

AT THE

Anniversary Convention

OF

MINISTERS,

May 31st. 1722.

Dr. Cotton Mather's

SERMON,

AT THE

Anniversary Convention

OF

MINISTERS,

May 31st. 1721.

BRITISH MUSEUM

The MINISTER.

A Sermon,

Offer'd unto the

Anniverſary Convention

OF

MINISTERS,

From ſeveral Parts of

New-England,

Met at BOSTON, 31 d. III m.

1722.

By One of their Number.

And publiſhed at the Requeſt of them that heard it.

Divitji abundet, per me licet, quiſquis volueni: In Operibus mea ſit Abundantia.

BOSTON: Printed in the Year 1722.

The MINISTER.

A Sermon,

Offer'd unto the

Anniversary Convention

OF

MINISTERS,

From all Parts of

New-England,

Met at BOSTON, May 3. d. 11 m.

1722.

By One of their Number.

And published at the Request of them that heard it.

Divinis obsunder, per me licet, quilibet volumen: In Operibus mea Fr. Rhenanus.

BOSTON: Printed in the Year 1722.

BRITISH MUSEUM

The SERVICES OF AN *Useful Ministry.*

Rev. II. 19.

I know thy —— SERVICE.

ERVICE! The *Occasions* for it in a necessitous World, are how Manifold, how Marvellous! The *Felicities* of the Men who are distinguished, *as we are*, by being set apart above other Men, for the doing of it unto all other Men, how very Desirable! A *Good Work* is *desired* by them, who offer themselves unto a *Station*, which is to be filled with nothing but *Service* to all the World; and all the *good Works* of, *A serviceable Man.*

Exceeds

Exceeding Large is the *Field* which the *ſerviceable Man* has to act upon; *Exceeding Broad* the *Law*, which demands, and which directs the *Service* that he is called unto. Ah, *ſinful* World! Ah, *woful* World! How much *Service* does thy Condition require, from all that wiſh well unto thee! There needs abundance to be done, that the Glorious GOD and His CHRIST may be more glorified in the World: That the World *periſhing in its own Corruption*, may be reſcued from the Errors and Manners which *drown* it in *Perdition*; That the Miſeries of the World may have *Remedies* and *Abatements* provided for them, and miſerable People be relieved. Many, many *good Offices* are to be done for the *Kingdom of* GOD in the World. Such Things are *Services*. To do ſuch Things is to be *Serviceable*.

How Few, alas, How *Few*, are duely *diſpoſed* unto ſuch Things! How Few, alas, how *Few*, are ſtrongly *delighted* in the doing of them! Yet there are a *few Names*; A *Few* noble, newborn, highborn, and refined Souls, who ſtudy to be *Serviceable*; The ſweeteſt Pleaſure they know in the World, is to be *Serviceable*! I believe, My Addreſs is now made unto an Aſſembly of *ſuch*. And, Sirs, *I have a Meſſage from* GOD *unto you*!

We have now before us a vaſt Encouragement for ſuch *Servants* of GOD and of Mankind. There was a Church at *Thyatira*, whereof the *Paſtor* was an *Angel* of a Man. Indeed the City, which is at this Day called, *Akhiſar*, tho' it flouriſhes with *Trade* more than ſome of her deſolate Siſters, yet it has no ſuch *Flock* of our SAVIOUR in it. Alas, A place that has had in

it

it a *Pastor* of the *first Rate* for Endowments and Atchievements, may come to be a seat of horrid Ignorance and Wickedness. GOD *forbid, that* should be. But now, this *Pastor* of *Thyatira* is thus encouraged; *I know thy Works.* Our Blessed JESUS in the Heavenly World, has the *Knowledge* of the *Works* done by His faithful Servants on Earth. Several commendable Things in that *Man of God*, are mentioned. One of them is called, SERVICE. The *Service* which this good Man did, both for the Lord, and for His People, is intended. *I know it*, says the Lord. That Word intimates, not a *meer Knowing* of it, but also a being *well-pleased* with it.

I bring you a *faithful Saying*, and one *worthy of all Acceptation*. 'Tis this; Our Glorious LORD *knows* who *serves* Him; *Knows* what *Service* they do for Him; *Knows* and *Likes* every *good Service* that is done for Him.

There is a *Preliminary*, needless in this Auditory to be insisted on. Sensible of this, That it is the *Duty* and *Interest* of every Man, to be a *Servant* of the Glorious GOD, who has *formed us for Himself*, and of His CHRIST who has *bought us with a Price*, we are become His *willing Servants*. We have renounced the *Service* of all our old *Idols*; we have embraced the *Service* of the *Living* GOD, and resolved on *living to* GOD: we are become *Fellow-servants* with the *Holy Ones*, who are the *Ministers which do the pleasure of our* GOD. Indeed, *This Honour have all the gracious Ones!* And being dedicated unto the *Service* of GOD, we become the *Children of the Highest*, in this Illustrious Dignity.

But what I am now to profecute, is this.

I. He that would approve himſelf a *Servant* of GOD, muſt be a Man of SERVICE; *A ſerviceable Man.* The *Title* of, *A Servant of GOD*, is not enough. A *Servant* who *does nothing*, is no *Servant*. *A ſlothful* Servant is a *wicked* Servant: [Matth. XXV. 26.]

But what is the *Service*, that muſt be endeavoured by the *Servant of GOD*? The Character of, *The ſerviceable Man*, what is it, that we may ſee it, and prize it, and aſpire after it?

Firſt. A *Servant* of GOD, muſt lead a *Life of Obedience* to GOD: Such a Life is a *Life of Service*. We muſt not imagine, that we can be *ſerviceable* to GOD, as we can to one another. He needs not our *Service*. He is not *worſhipped, as needing any thing*. No *Profit* properly accrues to Him from our *Service*. *Can a Man be profitable to God?* No, by no means. When we have done all, we *are unprofitable Servants*. But then, To *do the Will* of GOD, this is to *ſerve* Him. When we *obey* the *Will* of GOD, then we do Him *Service*. The *Service* expected from us, is, To wait upon GOD with that ſubmiſſive Expectation; Act. IX. 6. *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* And, when we learn, what the *Lord would have us to do*, we are to fly unto the doing of it; fly with the *Wings* of a cheerful and ſpeedy Alacrity; *Mount up as with the Wings of Eagles!* The moſt lovely and lively *Servant* that ever GOD had in the World, ſo deſcribed what He did; *I do always the Things that pleaſe the Father.* Briefly; A *Service* is, Every thing that *glorifies* GOD. Now, Every *Acknowledgement* that we make of

GOD,

GOD, and of His *Glory*; This *glorifies* Him. To *Acknowledge* GOD, is to *Glorify* Him. *Servant of GOD*, This is the *Service* expected from thee. Be always *acknowledging* the Great GOD, and thy SAVIOUR. *Acknowledge* Him in *all thy Ways*; Readily take all right *Ways* to *acknowledge* Him.

Secondly. A *Servant* of GOD, must employ all his *Talents* for GOD. Study that GOD may have some *Service* and *Honour*, out of all his *Talents*; all his Possessions, all his Enjoyments, all his Capacities. 'Tis a Metaphor by which our State is luculently and elegantly represented in the Word of our GOD. *Servants* entrusted with *Talents* to be employ'd for the LORD. We read, Matth. XXV. 15. *To one He gave five Talents, to another two, and to another one.* There is a *Kingdom of GOD*, which every one is to *serve* in the World. When we know GOD, and own GOD, and come to converse with GOD, in His CHRIST; This, this is the Thing in which the *Kingdom of GOD* is carried on. Every Thing which has a Tendency to advance *Knowledge* and *Vertue* and genuine *Christianity* in the World, is a *Service* to the *Kingdom of* GOD. Every Man has it in his way to *do something* for the *Kingdom of GOD*; That is to do some *Service* for Him. Our *Advantages* to promote the Things that are *Holy and Just and Good* in the World, are our *Talents*. Our Lord has *entrusted* us, and indeed *enriched* us, with many Things wherein we are *advantaged* for the doing of something for His *Kingdom*. There is a *Service* in every thing that we do, of such an Intention. *Servant of GOD*, This is the *Service* expected from thee. Ponder,

Often, often! ponder, what thou mayst be *able to do*, that the Great GOD and thy SAVIOUR may have the *Regards* paid unto Him which are due unto Him. As far as thou art Able, bring *others* to join with thee, in *knowing of GOD, and serving Him with a perfect Heart, and a willing Mind.* All that thou shalt find the Lord *enable* thee to do, do it that GOD may be *Adored*, and and not *forgotten* among the Sons of Men.

Thirdly. A *Servant* of GOD must pursue the *Welfare* of his *Neighbour*; labour to be a *Blessing* in his Neighbourhood; yea, as much a *Blessing* to the *Public* as may be with GOD's leave obtained. A *Kindness* is a *Service*. As often as we shew a *Kindness*, we do a *Service*. If we are *Kind* unto Men, out of Respect unto GOD, we serve not *Them* only, but GOD also, in what we do. We are commanded; Gal. VI. 10. *As we have Opportunity let us do good unto all Men.* Yea, 'tis a *Golden Maxim*; When it is *tried*, it *will come forth as Gold*; and it will bear to be beaten upon, until it be extended like the very Heavens; *An Ability to do Good, not only gives a Right, but also an Obligation unto the doing of it.* No *Persecution* from them that *weakly* or worse than so, sometimes go to *cry one unto a Post*; No *Discouragement* shall make me easily give up this *Golden Maxim.* This, this is the *Service* expected from you, *O Servants of GOD.* You must labour to be *Useful Men.* First, Whenever you see any Man want your *Help* in any Thing, you must be an *Ezra*; even a *ready Helper* unto him. Have a matchless Relish for all Actions of *Benignity.* Then, you must *look about*, for Objects of

your Compassions, and Assistenees; and unto those *Objects* dispense your Succours as far as you are able. It must be *better* unto you *to Give than to Receive.* Again, You must in your *several Places*, be concerned for the Good of the *Public.* Wish well, Do well, to the several *Communities*, which you are the Members of. Withold nothing that you can afford for the Benefit of the *Communities* which you belong unto. Finally, All this *Beneficence*, all this Endeavour to do the part of a *Benefactor*, must proceed from a Principle of *Love* to Men; Yea, of *Love* to GOD and His CHRIST, who has *loved Men*, and bidden us to *Love* them. Your Principle must be that; Gal. V. 13. *By Love to serve one another*; That, 1 Cor. X. 24. *Let no Man seek his own, but every one anothers Wealth.* Behold, what it is to be *Serviceable! Service* lies in *these* Things. Our Glorious LORD says, *I know thy* SERVICE, when He sees a Man doing of *these* Things. Oh! that we were all inflamed with a *Zeal* to do such Things! Oh! that we were even swallowed up with the *Zeal* of being *universally Serviceable!* Being in the *Flock* of *Salvation*, Methinks, we should resemble the *Sheep*, which have nothing but what is *Useful* in them. Yea, *My Brethren*, Let us resemble our incomparable *Shepherd*, of whom you read, *He went about still doing of Good!*

The most charming and potent *Motive* to it, that ever was uttered, is what we now proceed unto.

II. Every *Servant* of the Lord, and every *Service* he does for the Lord, is *known* and *taken*, by the Glorious LORD.

There are Three Things to be now enquired.

First, *How does it appear*, that our Glorious LORD, *Knows* all that *Serve* Him, and all the *Service* they do for Him?

The Anſwer is; We may be ſure that GOD *knows*. And our Glorious LORD, is GOD as well as *Man*. Oh! How happy are we in our IMMANUEL; A SAVIOUR who is GOD as well as *Man*! There is not one of You, *My Brethren*, who has the leaſt Suſpicion, that the Glorious CHRIST, unto whom you have conſecrated Your ſelves and your All, is not that *Being* who is *Over all, GOD bleſſed for ever*; or, not the ſame in *Eſſence* with His Infinite and Eternal FATHER. You find your *Life* to be ſo much enwrapped in this *Faith*, you can ſooner *Dy* than make a *Shipwreck* of it: Or imagine, that *Mahomet* was the great *Reformer of the Chriſtian Religion!* The *beloved* Apoſtle, having ſaid of Him, *This is the True GOD, and Eternal Life*, he preſently warns us againſt *Falſe Gods*, and adds, 1 Joh. V. 21. *Keep your ſelves from Idols*. The *Ebionites* and *Cerenthians* then, as you know who have done ſince, denied the *Godhead* of our SAVIOUR. But we are warn'd, That we take heed of taking up ſuch *debaſing Thoughts* of the SON of GOD, (which is the Name given to our SAVIOUR no leſs than Ten Times within the compaſs of a very few Verſes here!) as to ſink Him into an *Idol*. If we take away the *only true Deity* from Him, we thereby fling Him down into the Rank of an *Inferiour Deity*, like the *Idols* of the Gentiles; and our Worſhipping of Him under the *Inferiour Notion* of one who is not by *Nature* the *True GOD*,

will be really to commit an *Idolatry* against the *only true* GOD. Whatever you do, I am sure you will not make an *Idol* of Him who is, the *True* GOD of our *Christian Religion*. Since *All Things were made by Him*, you cannot be so *Inexcusably* Impious as to question His *Eternal Power and Godhead*. When a sincere Servant of GOD found himself *known* by our JESUS, he cried out, *Thou art the Son of* GOD, *Thou art the King of Israel*. Since the *King of Israel* is the *proper Son of* GOD, He *knows* who His *Nathanaels* are, and He *knows* what they do, tho' covered with never such a shady *Fig-tree*; As He *knows* other People too, and their Doings, whatever *Fig-leaves* they may cover themselves withal. *Known to* GOD *are all His Works*; and *known unto* GOD are all *our Works*, and whatever *Works* we do for *Him*. *The Lord knows who are His*; and He *knows* what they do for *Him*. The Servants of GOD, and their Services cannot be concealed from the *Divine Omniscience*; from One whose *Understanding is Infinite*. LORD, *Thou art acquainted with all our ways!* LORD, *There is not a Word in our Tongue, but thou knowest it altogether!* LORD, *Thou knowest our Thoughts afar off!*

And how far, even the *Man* JESUS, is made Conscious, to what is *known*, by the SON of GOD, who *knows all Things*, and *knows* them *that love Him*; Or, may in *other ways* also, have all that is done in and for His Churches brought under His *Cognisance*; 'Tis to us as yet *unknown*, and Incomprehensible!

Yea, The *Angels* of the Lord, (who are called, *The Eyes of the Lord*;) These also *know* the Ser-

vants

Saints of the Lord; These own them for their *Brethren*. The *good Angels* are the *Witnesses* of our *Services*, and of all the *Good* we do in the World. A young Minister would not have been charged as, *Before the Elect Angels*, if the *Angels* were to make no Observation of what he did in the Discharge of his Ministry. Our *Services* (as well as our *Sufferings*) are *Spectacles* to *Angels*; grateful *Spectacles*! joyful *Spectacles*! Bringing up to the Heavens a *Report*, of what they have seen, when they have been *walking to and fro thro' the Earth*; no doubt, they Report the *Services* done for the *Kingdom of GOD* upon Earth. It is a *Report*, that *makes glad the City of GOD*! And there is a *Record* made of all the *Services*; There is a *Book of Remembrance*, wherein they all stand *Recorded*. In that BOOK, there is an Entry made of all that *serve* GOD, and *Think on His Name*, and of all that they *Think to do for His Name*. The Glorious KING of Heaven, who *never sleeps nor slumbers*, looks into that BOOK, and finds there those whom *He delights to Honour*; and He *Thinks* what He will do for them. I tender you none but *Scriptural Idea's* in the Things thus intimated. But how is it possible to hear such Intimations, without wishing, *Oh! That I may serve the Glorious* LORD! *Oh! Let me be always engaged in Services for His Glorious Name*!

Secondly, *Whence does it arise*, that our Glorious LORD *likes* that we should *serve* Him, and He should see us do *Service* for Him? The Answer is; 'Tis *Well-doing*: 'Tis doing what our LORD has *called* for. Our Glorious LORD has *Commanded* us to *serve* Him, and be very *Serviceable*;

able; And most certainly He will *approve* it, if we do what He hath *shewn* us, and what He *requires of us*. We are so advised; Joh. XV. 8. *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much Fruit.* Now, to *do much Good*, is to *bear much Fruit*. Our *Work* is assign'd us by our LORD. It is a *good Work*. Our Lord is pleased with it, when He sees us at our *Work*. 'Tis His *Work*. If we *abound in the Work of the Lord*, our *Labour will not be in vain*; 'Tis *for the Lord*. Yea, the more *Service* we do, the more *Likeness* we have unto our GOD, and unto our Lord JESUS CHRIST. He *likes* it well, that we should be *like* unto Him. Our GOD is a *Good GOD*; and He does *Good*. We read, Psal. CXLV. 9. *The Lord is good to all, and his tender Mercies are over all his Works.* The more *Good* any Man is, and the more *Good* he does, the more is he a *Follower* of the Blessed GOD. Here, here to be *like GOD*, is no criminal Ambition. A Man always doing *Service*, and *full of Goodness*, This is a Man of whom GOD will say, *He is a Man after my own Heart*. Syr. If this be your only way of doing it, it shall never be objected as a Crime unto you, *Thou hast set thy Heart as the Heart of God*. Our amiable JESUS was one entirely devoted unto the *Service* of GOD. He *served* GOD, even His *Father*, who said of Him with the pleasure of a GOD; *Behold, my Servant, in whom my Soul delighteth*. He *served* and saved Man *unto the uttermost*: Never to be parallel'd, among all the *Sons of the Mighty*, whom the Nations *Deified* for the Emoluments received from them! He said; Matth. XX. 28. *The Son of Man came to do Service*. The

more

more *Service* we do, the more we *walk as He walked*; the more *such a Mind is in us*, as there was in Him. The more *Good* we do, the more we are the *Followers of the good One*, and have His *Image* upon us. They that are continually *serving* of good Interests, *They are the Children of a King; As Thou art so are They, O Lord, each one resembling thee!*

Thirdly. *Wherein* does the Glorious LORD express His *Knowing* and *Liking* every good *Service* that is done unto Him?

The Answer is, *Both Worlds will testify it!*

First, The *Peace* and *Joy* that may fill the Mind of the *serviceable Man*: How can this be any other than *Wonderful!* While one is doing *Service* for GOD and Man, he has a *Conscience* which Comforts him with a, *Well-done!* The Comforts of a *good Conscience* may be a *continual Feast* unto him. To the *Songs* of such a *Conscience*, yea, be the *Night* never so Dark with him on other Accounts, no Music ever can be comparable. To *Live Usefully*, is to *Live Pleasantly*. There is a vertuous *Epicurism* in *Usefulness*. No *Epicure* can swim in such Delights, as the Man that is *Useful* wherever he comes, *Useful* to all about him. Some keep *Languishing* in a sorrowful want of *Assurance*. What shall they do, that with *assured Souls*, they may *Rejoice in the Hope of the Glory of* GOD? My constant Counsil would be; *Be Fruitful*: This is the way to be *Joyful*. Be *up* and be *doing*. *Activity*, *Activity*, in the *Service* of GOD, and His People; This will be most likely to be followed and rewarded, with Triumphant Satisfactions. We read, Psal. LXV. 13.

The

The Vallies are covered over with Corn; they shout for Joy, they also sing. A Soul very *Fruitful*, tho' it be in a *low Valley* of *Humility*, yea, and of *Affliction*, in very diſtreſſed Circumſtances, it ſhall *ſhout for Joy, it ſhall alſo ſing.*

Secondly. The *ſerviceable Man*, 'tis ordered by the Providence of GOD, that he *lives Deſired*, he *dies Lamented*. *Serviceableneſs* will indeed expoſe a Man to the *malignity* of wicked Men. But, O ye *Valiant of Iſrael*, I know you ſcorn to be *loved* where your Glorious Lord is *hated*. And yet, even the worſt of Men oftentimes (the veriеſt *Herods* in the City!) will have ſome Reverence for a *ſerviceable Man*. Yea, This is the *Good Man*, for whom ſome would *even dare to Dy*; and others, that perhaps could be glad he were *Dead*, and can hardly give him a *good Word*, yet are compelled anon to confeſs, *He is a good Man*. 'Tis an *honourable* Term, *That*; Luk. XXII. 25. *Benefactors*. The more *Serviceable*, the more *Honourable*. GOD often gives this to the Men of *Service*; They ſhall be Men of *Eſteem*. We read of a *good Man* whom GOD made a *great Man*; Eſt. X. 3. *He was great among the Jews, and accepted with the multitude of his Brethren.* If ſuch a Man be in danger of being ſnatch'd away by *Death*, what *Prayers*, what *Cries*, go up to Heaven for his *Life*! As for *Peter* when he was impriſoned, They *go up without ceaſing* for him. At laſt, when he *dies*, his *Death* produces a Mourning like that of *Joſiah*'s; a Mourning like that at the Threſhing-floor of *Atad*. The weeping Eyes of the Survivors, look after him, as they after the Prophets of old; *My Father, my Father*;

The Chariots of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof! There shall be given to them such a Testimony, as there was to that aged Propher of GOD; 2 Chron. XXIV. 16. *To have done good in Israel.*

Thirdly, O *serviceable Man*; The *main Harvest* is to come; in the *World to come*. Then, then, He that *sowed* Services *plentifully*, *shall reap* Recompences *plentifully*. Yea, They that *sow'd in Tears*, will *return with Joy*, *bringing their Sheaves with them!* The Man who has painfully *served* God and His People, may leave *this World*, with such comfortable Terms as these; Isa. XXXVIII. 3. *Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have done good before thee.* Or those; Neh. V. 19. *Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this People.* I say, He *may* do so; I don't say, He *will* do so. No, I expect that I shall see the Curtains of his Death-bed all hung with *Panitentials*, and I shall find him Dy condemning of himself, as a *Barren Tree*, worthy to be cut down, & wondring that it is no sooner done; and crying out; *O my GOD, It is with a Face and a Soul full of Confusion, that I look back on my few, poor, mean Services to thy Kingdom; And I have no Righteousness but that of my spotless JESUS to present before thee, that I may find Favour with thee.* And yet the self-annihilating *Servant* of God, will now have the *Joy of Harvest* before him, to *strengthen* him in his dying *Agonies*. Be sure, such a Man will find in the *other World*, that which will make him no loser by all his Attempts to be *Serviceable* here. We have the Word of our blessed JESUS for it; And the Word of *One risen from the Dead*, may certainly be

be relied upon, for what we may hope *after Death* to meet withal! Matth. X. 42. —*He shall in no wise lose his Reward.* O *Servant* of GOD, O Man of *Services*; Not one of all thy *Services* will be forgotten. Thy GOD will not *forget thy Labour of Love.* All thy *Services*, being sprinkled with the *Blood of the Lamb*, will be produced and proclaimed in the *City of the living GOD.* Thy poor *Services* will be recompensed with unknown *Retaliations*; with a *Crown* that shall *never fade away.* Thy *Diligence* in doing of good *Services*, will infallibly have a sufficient *Recompence. Whatsoever good Thing any Man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.* This we *know.* But what the *Good* will be, This we *know not now, we shall know hereafter!* This, there has not been any *Ascent high enough in the Heart of Man to conceive!* Yea, of a *serviceable Man* we may say, *Semper orat.* My Friend, While thou art *working always*, thou art in a most prevalent manner *praying always.* All thy *Services* have a *Voice* going up to Heaven from them, and are so many *Supplications* for the *Blessings of Goodness* to pour down from thence upon thee. Syrs, Let not the *Faith* of this matter flag with you: *GOD is a Rewarder of them who diligently serve Him.*

¶ Enough has been spoken to invite the MINISTERS of the Gospel, into the *Holy Ambition* of being *serviceable Men.* Enough! Nay, what need of speaking any thing *at all*, to excite a Thing of such a *self-evident Excellency!* For, as the Apostle says unto his *Thessalonians* about *Brotherly-love*, *Of Brotherly-love ye need not that I write unto you, for you are taught of God:* So I

may ſay, My Brethren, *Of a Zeal to be Serviceable ye need not that I ſpeak much unto you*: GOD *has taught you to be Fervent in Spirit, ſerving the Lord.*

It is a moſt *Inſtructive* as well as a moſt *Ennobling* Title, that our Glorious LORD has put upon the *Paſtors* of His Churches, when He has given the Name of ANGELS unto them. So has He *Raiſed* His *poor ones out of the Duſt, and ſet them with Princes, even with the Princes of His People*! Now what are the *good Angels*, but the *Angels* that are always *doing of Good*; and ſuch as expreſs their *Good-will towards Men*, while they are offering of *Glory to GOD in the Higheſt*? Thoſe Bright *Angels* are *Miniſtring Spirits*; and the *Services* they do for the *Heirs of Salvation*, which are ſo little conſidered by our inſenſible and *unthankful* and *unholy* Carnality, are ſuch as will never be known, till we come to *walk in our Places among thoſe that ſtand by*. But while we are buſy in doing all poſſible *Services* for the Children of Men, and eſpecially for the Children of GOD, and moſt of all in the *Affairs of their Salvation*; We have thoſe bright *Angels* for our Directors and our Aſſociates: and we have a *Token for Good*, that we ſhall ſhortly be taken into the delightful *Company* of them to whom we are now a delightful *Spectacle*. *My Brethren*, Our Invitation to become very *Serviceable* is in effect an Invitation to become very *Angelical*; and *Men greatly beloved*.

All that I ſhall endeavour ſhall be not at all to make any Delibations, from the many Writers, who ſince *Chryſoſtom*, have written on the *Paſto-*

ral

ral Office, but with a Plainness and Freedom equal to that of the most *Experimental Preaching*, to *stir up your pure Minds by way of Remembrance*, in a few of the many PROPOSALS that may be made, for our *Services* unto the People of GOD. A learned Man wrote a Book, *De Pastore Conscientioso*. Such a *Pastor* shall now in the plain, rough, coarse Habit of a *John Baptist* be set before you.

My Fellow-Souldiers, *Let us be of good Courage, and play the wise Men, for our People, and for the Cities of our* GOD.

What I will *first* propose, will be a Motion, which if it may be accepted, there will indeed be little need for Persons of your superiour and penetrating Intellectuals, to be address'd with *any more*. The PROPOSAL is, That you *often* take the Point into a due *Consideration* with you, *What Service is there that I may further do, for the most Glorious* LORD? There is an *High Sentence* among the *Proverbs of Israel*, and one well worthy to *govern* our Conduct in the World: Prov. XIV. 22. *Mercy and Truth shall be to them who devise Good*. Oh! May we be Men always *devising of Good*! May our *Devices* of *Services* wherein we shall *do Good*, be Exquisite, be Numberless! May we be full of that *Wisdom*, which will find out *well-advised Inventions* to *do Good* in the World!

Now, Because there must be a *Time for every Purpose*; and one principal Cause why so many *good Things* advised and also approved among us, miss of being done, is because there is not special care taken to assign a proper TIME for the doing

doing of them; 'tis to be desired, That we *set* apart some certain TIME *every Week*, [Yea, Syrs, why not, *Every Day*!] to have our Thoughts employed on the generous Question, *What Good may I do?* But that the *Question* may be the more effectually thought upon, and that our *Opportunities to do Good*, may not be lost in our *Inadvertencies*, it is to be desired, That the *various Objects* which call for our *Services*, may distinctly, explicitly, successively, have a just *Consideration* allow'd unto them. We have our *Flocks*; and we have the *Land*; Yea, whole *Countreys* and *Nations*: and we have our *Families*, and several *Relatives*; and we have particular *Neighbours*, whose *Griefs* or *Sins* are before us; All bespeaking of *Services* from us. Nor will it be amiss for our *Charity to begin at Home*, and *first* see what may be done for GOD in our own *Hearts* and *Lives*. We may also discover many *Services* that may be more conveniently done by *others* than by *our selves*; for which we may be their *Monitors*. You will doubtless now see, I had Reason to suggest, That *Once a Week* is too small an Allowance for the Generous Question. But you will *oftner than so*, make the Enquiry, *What Good is there to be done?* And, tho' in *Communing with your selves*, and your own *Spirit making a diligent Search*, after you have looked up unto the *Wonderful One*, who is our *Counsellour*, that a barren Mind may from Him have a Supply of Right *Thoughts* unto it, [For, *From me is thy Fruit found, saith the Lord*!] you will find the old Saying verified, *A Man's own Mind will tell him more, than seven Watch-men on an high Towre*;

Yet

Yet it may not be amiss to have our intimate *Friends*, whom we may ask, *To Think for us*, and we may *take sweet Counsel together* on the Methods wherein we may be *Serviceable*. Yea, Let us be very *Thankful* to the obliging *Friends*, that will be *Thoughtful for us*, and count them worthy of some *Reward* from us that will *enrich* us with a Discovery of *Methods* wherein we may be *Serviceable*.

But having moved, first, that we may be very *Inquisitive*, my next Motion is, That we may be very *Industrious*, and be *Diligent in our Business*, remembring what a *King* we *stand before*. The Hebrew Phrase, for a *Consecration*, is, [Exod. XXVIII. 41.] *A filling of the Hand*. Those that are under a *Consecration* to the Evangelical Ministry, have their *Hands full of Work*; They have enough to do; And their *Heads* and *Hearts* can't be too full of Care, to do the *Work*. Brother, *Do with thy might what thy Hand finds to do*.

It is no little *Industry* that is requisite unto our *laying up* of those *precious and pleasant Riches* in the *Chambers* of our Souls, that may qualify us to *do Good*, and enable us to bring forth *Treasures* like *Scribes well instructed for the Kingdom of* GOD. It is not every Man that is qualified for *Services*. He must be a skilful *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab*, that will work to good Purpose about the *Tabernacle* of our GOD. A *serviceable Man* must be one of many *Accomplishments*. But no Man may hope to be *accomplished* for eminent *Services*, who does not with an uncommon *Industry*, outdo the Laborious *Bee* to have his *Hive* well stocked, and employ a too *disliked Labour*

that

that alone *overcometh all things*. And here, the *Languages* and *Sciences*, with which we should come furnished from the *Schools* not being *enough*, [And it is to be deplored that sometimes they are *No more*! GOD preserve our *Pulpits* from *Illiterate Usurpers*.] we should be continually adding to our *Furniture*, by doing as the young Minister was directed, *Give thy self unto Reading*; which Direction has been among Divines, you know, so Repeted, *Lege, Lege, Aliquid Herebit*. But that what we *Read* may the more *Abide* by us, our *Pen* lodging more material and memorable Passages in our *Quotidiana*, or our *Adversaria*, (for imitating the ancient *Photius*) will secure it for us. A well-chosen *Library* should be our *Laboratory*, (in which if a young Minister have the *Theologia Theoretico-practica* of the rare *Maestricht*, in that *One* matchless Composition he has a *Library*!) where *one Hour* should be *better* to us than a *dozen elsewhere*. And that Word, *Nusquam Requiem invenio nisi in claustro et in Libro*, is what we should experimentally feel the meaning of.

But then, our *Industry* is as much requisite for the *Laying out* of those Things wherewith our GOD has filled us and fitted us, to *do Good* among His People in the World. It was an usual Stroke in the Charge given to Ministers in the Ancient Ordinations, *Æternitatem Cogita*. Syrs, Being on the very Borders of *Eternity*, and very *speedily*, perhaps very *suddenly*, passing into it, Oh! how sedulously should we employ every Minute of our little *Time*, in doing all the *Services* imaginable! How precious, must be our

Time

Time unto us, and how husbanded with an *Honest Parsimony!* How sollicitous ought we to be, that we may so spend our *Time*, as to *give up our Account with Joy and not with Grief!* What *Circumspection* should we use, that we may be such *Wise Redeemers of Time*, as to let no *Fragments* or *Filings* of it be lost! Verily, Those Men who go thro' a vast Variety of *Services*, and besides their *daily*, and almost *hourly*, *Essays to do Good*, are able to show very many *Memorials* of their *Essays* to be *Serviceable*, yet have gone Mourning before the Lord all their Days for the *Loss of Time* with which they could charge themselves. They have every *Evening*, with a blushing Regret cried unto their Lord, *Oh! Pardon, pardon my misspence of Time this Day!* And when they have come to the *Evening* of their Lives, the dying Moan of their Souls has been, *O my Friends, the Loss of Time, the Loss of Time, now sits heavy on me!* What shall *they* do then, who do as if they had *nothing to do?*

Give me leave to set before you some *Exemples* of *Industry* in *Services*, which may quicken our Pace, or at least be a *Spur to Loiterers*. I will only touch upon *Two Exemples*; whereto there shall be a *Third Exemple* added, before which the former, and all that can be produced, will disappear, and be absorb'd in *Sun-Beams*.

I will single out One *serviceable Man* among the *Ancients*. It shall be the Excellent, (but how abused!) *Origen*. He,—— as he was Pious from his Childhood,—— his *Breast* then an Habitation of GOD,——) so *Nulla pars Ætatis perijt a studijs*. What a progress did he make in

acquainting himself with all that was then Knowable! They said of him, *Ingenium suum exercebat ad omnia perdiscenda.* How frequent were the *Scholastic Exercises* which he performed! Every Day, I know not how many. The *Treatises* written by him, how large the Catalogue! How often, how often, did he set apart whole Days for *Prayer* with *Fasting* before the Lord! And sometimes his *Vigils*, devoting a good part of a *Night* unto his Heavenly Interviews! The Reputation of that *wonderful Man*, ought to be rescued from the Wrongs with which the Iniquity of many Ages has overwhelmed it.

I will single out One *serviceable Man* among the *Moderns*. It shall be the Excellent (but how abused!) *Calvin*. A most indefatigable Student! One who preached the best part of *Three Hundred Sermons* every Year, and read near *Two Hundred Lectures*; and held Correspondencies which forced him unto the writing of many *Letters*, and on weighty Cases. His published Works make *Twelve Volumns* in *Folio*. His *Devotions* too were Extraordinary. And when some would have perswaded him to spare himself, his Reply was, *What? Would you have the Lord find me idle, at His coming and calling for me?*

Alas, How few such Men as these, *appear in the vast Whirlpool!* But, I pray, Did such *Diligent Servants* of GOD, ever any of them Repent of their *Diligence*? Or, when they were *caught up into the Paradise* of GOD, can we suppose that they blamed themselves for doing too many *services*, or spending their *Time* in such Assiduities?

But I call to Mind, that I promised you a *Third Example*. I will carry you to an *Example* much Higher than these; *Far above all Heavens*. Let us *look off* of these *unto* JESUS, our incomparable JESUS! The JESUS, who was *always at Work* for His FATHER! The JESUS, who never had one *Idle minute* in all His Conversation! The *Dispatch* of Great Things He made in Four or Five Years Time, when it comes to be considered, it will be found Astonishing. I remember a Passage of our famous *Baxter*, (who was himself a Prodigy of *Industry*.) He says, *I Read where* CHRIST *was all Night in Praying; But not where He spent an Hour in Playing.* Oh! That we were more like to our Blessed JESUS!

And yet, I would not be so Severe and Austere, as utterly to exclude an, *Interpone tuis — hîc, Wisdom is profitable to direct.* Nay, There are some *Servants* of GOD, and *Young* ones too, so zealously *Overdoing* in their *Services*, that the *Curb* is to be applied unto them, *O ye Servants of the Lord, who stand in the House of the Lord*, so manage your Conduct, that you may not by being *Righteous* (or Industrious) *over much*, even *Destroy your selves. This* the Enemy *would have!* He will be content, even at this Game, rather than fail of getting you *destroy'd*, any way, to get you *out of the way!* You shall *do Good*, beyond your *Strength!* And by *over doing* be quickly left without all *Strength*, and put beyond the doing of what you might by a more *discreet Management* have lived many Years to do.

Industry is the Point we are upon. But now, Thirdly, Let this *Industry*, and *our profiting* ap-

pear unto all Men, in the *Public Performances* of our MINISTRY. May *They* be such as may promote and proclaim the *Beauties of Holiness* in the *House* of our GOD.

Here, First, Our PRAYERS; May they be such as to demonstrate, that we are *Israelites indeed*, and Men that know what it is to *weep and make Supplication*: *Israels*, that as *Princes* can *prevail with our GOD*. May They be such, as with a *copious and pathetic Variety* to express the *various Condition* of them for whom we speak unto the Lord; and be *varied upon Occasions*. May They be such as to suit the several *Classes* of our People, and have a mighty Efficacy, to bring them into a suitable Behaviour under the *Doctrine of GOD our Saviour*, and unto those *good Things* which are to be wished for them. Yea, whatever *Truths* we are singularly desirous to have inculcated upon them, and entertained among them, we may work these *Truths* into our *Prayers*, at such a rate, as to bring them down with *Reverberations* of a very powerful Efficacy from Heaven upon them. And what a pleasure shall we now also taste, when we see, that our People do learn to *Pray* from what they hear in our *Prayers*. At the same time, we may render it evident unto all the World, that we need not any *Tools* of a *Foolish Shepherd*, which were not introduced into the *Temple* of GOD, until some Hundreds of Years had rolled away under the *Sin* and *Sloth*, of the *Grand Apostasy*.

But then, our SERMONS; How well-studied ought these to be! How Laboured! What *Beaten Oil*, for the Lamps of the Sanctuary! The

Subjects

Subjects of our *Sermons*; These ought to be *well-chosen*: So *Chosen*, as to do the Part of a *prudent and faithful* Steward, who dispenses to every one, their *Food in the season* thereof: So *Chosen*, as to do the Part of a Vigilant *Watch-man*, observing the Indigitations of Heaven, to bring on *Words in Season*, and such as will be *duly spoken*. That we may be led unto *proper Subjects*, as it must be usual with us to *Preach on Design*, and not at *Random*, only led by what we find it *most easy* for us to Preach about, so we must with much Importunity look up to our Glorious LORD, *That He would lead us in the way wherein He would have us to go.*

I will yet more particularly Recommend it unto the *Servants* of GOD; That whatever *sad Things* may befal Themselves, they would be thereby led unto such *Subjects* for their Ministry, as otherwise they might not have so much thought upon. *My Brethren*, Our SAVIOUR, *The Lord our Healer*, keeping us under His *Holy Discipline*, will have us ever now and then, to be visited with *sad Things* in our *Pilgrimage*. The Intent of the *Digging* and the *Dunging* and the *Cutting* that we undergo in our *sad Things*, is to render us the more *Fruitful* in our *Ministry*. Wherefore, whenever any *sad Things* befal us, let us think, *What Lessons of Piety, would my* SAVIOUR *now excite me to treat His People withal.* Truly, the *Evil* of our *sad Things*, will be very much taken away, if our *People* as well as we *our selves* get *Good* by them all. It will prove a wondrous Alleviation of *Our Sorrows*, if we find that our SAVIOUR will make *His People* fare the better for them.

All

All this hinders me not from saying, That the whole *Body of Divinity* should in the Course of our Ministry be gone thorough; And the more in *Order*, the better. So we shall *Declare the whole Counsel of* GOD!

But, among the *Subjects* with which we feed our People, I Propound and Entreat, That a Glorious CHRIST may never, *Never!*— be forgotten. The *Truth* is not well discerned, nor the *Word of Truth well divided*, until the *Truth as it is in Jesus* be exhibited. For *Ministers* to have this recommended unto them, *That they should not preach much about the Person of Christ!*— I am surprized; I am ashamed!—— Would the blessed Apostle PAUL have spoke such a Word? A *Paul*, who says, *I determine to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.* Oh! For more of the *Pauline* Preaching!— Travellers affirm, That in the *Mahometan Mosches*, there are sometimes *whole Sermons* on the *Glories* of our JESUS! And He be so rarely mentioned in *our Sermons*, is if it were an *Indecent Stoup* to speak of *Him*! Truly, the fearful *Decay of Christianity* in the World, is very much owing to the inexcusable *Impiety* of overlooking a Glorious CHRIST, so much in the *empty Harangues* which now often pass for *Sermons*. *But Thou, O Man of* GOD, *flee this* Impiety. Let thy *Motto* be, CHRIST IS ALL. Whatever *Subject* be on the *Anvil*, see the *Aspect* which a Glorious CHRIST has upon it, and be sure to bring *Him* into it. Be thou a *Star*, to lead Men unto their SAVIOUR, and stop not until thou see them there. Behold, The greatest *Service* that can be done

done for the *Souls*, which thou wouldest be a *wise winner* of!

But while we are Examining, what *Subjects* we have to be handled in our Ministry, I must become an humble Petitioner, *and I blush to say so!* — on the behalf of some *Truths*, which all real and vital PIETY for ever *Lives* upon; and which yet alas, are threatened with a Sentence at least, of *Banishment*, from the Ministry in some Churches, which once they have been a *Beauty* and a *Safety* to. The *Truths* which are to shew us, How sensible we should be of our *natural Impotence* to *Turn* and *Love* unto GOD, and with what Sentiments the *withered Hand* is to be stretched out: The *Truths* which are to shew us, How we are to plead the *Sacrifice* and *Righteousness* of our SAVIOUR, that we may be pardoned and accepted with GOD: The *Truths* which are to shew us, How we are to Repair unto the *Cross* of our SAVIOUR that our *Indwelling Sin* may be mortified; The *Truths* which are to shew us, How we are to *live by the Faith of the SON of GOD*, and from our *Union* with Him as the *Head* of His People; and how we are to *Dy unto Creatures* in Conformity to the *Death* of our SAVIOUR: The *Truths* which are to shew us, How to sing the Song of *Moses* and of the *Lamb*, and accurately to distinguish between the *Two Covenants*, and come off entirely from the *Old Covenant* into the *New*, in our Conversion unto GOD: The *Truths* which are to shew us, How the *New Creature* is to be formed, and what are the *Parts*, and *Steps* and *Works*, of the *New Creation*, wherein we are to be the *Workmanship* of

GOD:

GOD: The *Truths* which are to ſhew us, How we may come to *know* our *Election* of GOD, and may not only taſte the *Conſolations of* GOD laid up for the *Elect* in the *Doctrines of Grace*, but alſo feel the *Incentives* which thoſe *Hopes* give us to *purify our ſelves*, and carry on *Holineſs to Perfection in the Fear of* GOD: The *Truths* wherein the *Myſtery of* CHRIST is moſt contained; wherein the *Spirit of the Goſpel* is moſt conſpicuous, and by which the *Power of Godlineſs* is moſt enkindled and preſerved? *My Friends*, what have theſe *Truths* done, to deſerve an *Excommunication* from the Houſe of our GOD? Or are we fond of ſeeing an, *Ichabod*, upon our Miniſtry? Verily, If we let theſe *Truths* go, the Glorious GOD Himſelf will be gone; Yea, be gone *far* from a Forſaken *Sanctuary*.

It is to be ſuſpected, That the Loſs of theſe *Glorious Truths*, if they muſt be *Loſt*, will be very much owing to an over great Value for ſuch *Books* as have been very much in Vogue among us; *Books*, whereof it may be complained, *Nomen* CHRISTI *non eſt ibi*, and, The *Religion of a Regenerate Mind* is not there to be met withal: *Books* which if our Young Men will read, they ought alſo to read the juſt Caſtigations, which Dr. *Edwards* in his *Preacher*, has beſtowed upon them. Upon this Occaſion, you will forgive me, if I do not ſuppreſs the Words which a venomous Writer of ſome Things, that he calls, *Laconicks*, has, with what Aim I know not, lately publiſhed. *The Presbyterian Divines have been obſerved of late* (ſays the Man) *to Preach after the manner of the Church-of*-England *men*. But, *without ſetting*

up

up for a Prophet (says he,) *I dare venture to affirm, that this will be their Ruine.* And now, *I dare venture to affirm,* that such a *Prophecy,* from such a *Balaam,* is what some in the World have cause to think upon.

But then, For the *manner of studying* on the *Subjects* which the *Lord our* GOD *brings* unto us; Oh! How *Prayerfully,* and with what a Spirit of PIETY should all be carried on! First we are to look up unto Heaven for the Divine *Influences* and *Assistences,* to carry us thro' our Undertaking; *Trusting in* GOD, that we may be so *happy* as to *handle the matter wisely.* Let us then Replenish and Embellish our Discourses, with the most *substantial Divinity*: For the Dishing out of which, let the *Preachers seek out acceptable Words.* Wherefore always provide *pertinent Scriptures* for every Parapraph. The *Voice of the Lord* speaking in them, *is full of Majesty!* And then, that the *shining Lights* in the House of GOD, may also be *burning* Ones, let us commonly try to *set the Truths on Fire,* before we send them out of our Hands. Let the *Truths* arrive to our Hearers *fired* and Flaming with some *affectuous Passages* that may be the enkindlers of *agreeable Devotions* in them.

Yea, Why should it not be a frequent Practice with us, when we have dispatched a *Paragraph* of a Sermon, to make a Pause, and get our own *Heart suitably affected,* with what we have prepared, before we go any further, and cast into the *Mould* of the *Truths,* by such *Confessions,* and such *Petitions,* as may be darted up to Heaven from us upon them! Certainly, This were the best

best way of *getting a Sermon by Heart* that can be thought upon. And I know not why the *studying of a Sermon* should not be a very *Holy Exercise!* This I know, Some that have been esteemed among the *Best of Preachers*, have professed themselves under a Terror of GOD, *Afraid of preaching a Sermon to others, before they have got some Good by it themselves.* They who thus first of all *Feel* the *Truths* in *themselves*, before they bring them to *others*, will be the *best of Preachers*; and what comes from the *Heart* of the *Speaker*, will be most likely to go to the *Heart* of the *Hearer*.

But then, it is to be expected, We shall all be so *Conscientious* about the *Preparations of the Sanctuary*, that it may not be complained, *Our Sermons are none of our own*; or, *We offer to God what has cost us nothing.* 'Tis true, The Compositures of them that have gone before us, may be *of use* unto us, to supply us with *useful Hints*, in the Composing of our *Sermons*. And some Ingenious Men have advanced a Fancy, That a Man of *mean Abilities* may come to fall very little short of the *ablest Preachers*, if he so carefully peruse *Their* Sermons, as entirely to *Digest* them, and become a *Master* of the *Best Thoughts* in them, and then laying them out *of his View*, proceed in his *own Way* and in his *own Style*, to deliver them. Be *That* how it will, *This* is to be insisted on. Our *Sermons* must be such, that we may and should go directly from our Knees in our *Studies* to our *Pulpits*. [What, With *Stolen Sermons*, O *Pastoral Care*, forgetting thy Title!] When we are thus on our Knees in our *Studies*,

as

as we shall bewail our faulty *Defects* relating to the *Subject* which our Sermons are employ'd upon; so, after we have done our very Best, that we may bring what is well prepared into the House of GOD, we shall bewail it, that we have made no better Preparation; o But with what Face can we look up to Heaven, if we have made nothing that may really be called a *Preparation*? Our *Sermons*, They must be such, That we may hope to have the *Blood* of our Saviour sprinkled on them, and His *Good* SPIRIT breathing in them. Our *Sermons*, They must be such, That we may therein *approve our selves Workmen that need not be ashamed*. Sirs, We are to *take Pains* about our *Sermons*, remembring, that as in the *Peace-Offerings* of Old, the LORD had *His* Part, and the *People* had *Theirs*; Thus, our *Sermons* are Oblations unto the Glorious GOD, as well as unto the *People*; *But I am a great* KING, *saith the Lord, and my Name is Dreadful*. Our Auditors may say to us, as the Jewish Senator said unto the greatest Person among them, *Non stas coram nobis, sed coram eo qui dixit, Fiat, & factus est mundus*. Oh, Do not offer a *corrupt* or a *maimed* Thing, unto His Holy MAJESTY! Memorable are the Words of One that was once a celebrated Preacher, in our *Cambridge*; 'GOD 'will Curse that Mans Labours that Lumbers 'up and down in the World all the Week, and 'then upon Saturday in the Afternoon goes to 'his Study; whereas GOD knows, that Time 'were little enough to Pray and Weep in, and 'get his Heart into a fit Frame for the Duties 'of the approaching Sabbath.'

But our *Sermons* being thus *well prepared*, we shall be yet the more *Serviceable*, if they be as *well pronounced*; And if our *Delivery* be not only free from all *Ridiculous Indecencies*, (especially shunning all, *Inanes sine mente sonos*,) but also such as to make it manifest, that we are our selves under *Celestial Impressions* of the *Truths* which we deliver unto others. And that our *Sermons* may have the more of *Energy*, however the *cast of our Eyes* on our *Notes* may be indulged, which even some of the greatest among the *Roman Orators* claimd an Indulgence for, (of an Oration made by a *Cicero* himself, whom they call, *The Father of the Roman Eloquence*, when it was a very long one, *Dicta de scripto est*: It was, what *Augustus* very much brought into Fashion:) yet methinks, there may be some Difference between the *fair using* of *Notes*, and the *dull Reading* of them. If we must look to see what *Arrow* is the next still to be taken out of our *Quiver*, yet such a *Reading* as wholly takes away the Life of *Speaking*, may prove a Prejudice to our *Services*; and should not be too much *admitted*, where it can be at all *avoided*.

But among all the *Opportunities to do Good*, wherewith we are accommodated in our *Ministry*, there is a *special Remark* to be set upon those, which the *Administration of the Sacraments* may bring unto us. When the *Candidates* of the *Sacraments* come unto us, what *Opportunities* have we, not only to *Instruct* them fully in the *Way of the Lord*, but also to go thro' a *process of Repentance* with them, and obtain their *explicit Consent* unto every thing that may settle *good*

Terms

Terms with Heaven for them? When the *Baptism* of the Lord is to be administred, what *Opportunities* have we to strike the Minds of the People with a *revived Awe* of their *Baptismal Vows*, and revive to them the *Bonds of the Covenant* which their *Baptism* has left upon them? An *Institution* thus *improved* would soon be less *disputed*. When the *Supper* of the Lord is to be administred, what *Opportunities* have we to put our People on making ready to *meet with their own Death*, by making ready to *shew forth the Lords?*. And then, to transport them into the very Heavens, when we shew them a CHRIST *evidently set forth as crucified before their Eyes?* The *Lamb as He had been slain* leads us up to the *Throne of GOD*. The *Prayers* made on these Great Occasions, What *Good Things* may we bring down on our People in them?

Yea, but, Fourthly; We have *private* Services to do for our People, as well as *Public* ones.

And here, We are at our *Choice*, whether our *Catechising* shall be numbred among our *public Services*, or our *private* ones. But it is very certain, that in the Quality of *Catechizers*, we may be beyond all Expression *Serviceable*. The Church in all Ages has been marvellously served by its *Catechisms* and *great is the Army* that have so published the *Word*; We have known more than half a Thousand; Among which we are agreed, what shall *shine as the Moon among the lesser Fires*.*

And

* But notwithstanding the undisputed Claim of this Catechism, (which was composed by those Men of Renoum, Dr. *Tuckney*, Dr. *Arrowsmith* and Mr. *Newcomen*, as well as approved by one of the

And the most *Meritorious* Persons in the Church, (yea, and some very great Men, when they have become *Emerited,*) have signalized their *Merits*, in this *condescending Way* to *do Good*, like the *Angels* of the *Little ones*. But while the *Echo's* of the *Catechism* are passing between *us* and our *Catechumens*, and we are doing the Office of him whom the Bible calls, *The Instructor of the Young*, what *Opportunities* have we, not only by *crumbled Questions* to procure an *Entrance* for the *Word* that *giveth Light*, but also to oblige their *Compliance* with the *Truths*, and their *Engagement* that

---

the most Illustrious *Assemblies* that ever met in the World,) some have thought, that like all other *Humane Compositures*, it might be capable of some Emendations. e. g.

Q. *What special Act of Providence* ——— ?

A. —*to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil*; [add, *and all other Sins,*] *upon pain of Death.*

Q. *Did our first Parents continue* ——— ?

A. *Our first Parents being left unto themselves, fell,* &c. [If they had stood, they would have acted, the *Freedom of their own Will.*]

Q. *What is the Misery* ———

A. After, *His Wrath and Curse*, add, *And enslaved unto the Powers of Darkness* ———

Q. *How doth Christ execute the Office of a Priest?*

A. After, *Sacrifice to satisfy Divine Justice*, insert, *in performing perfect Obedience to the Law of GOD, the Everlasting Rule of Righteousness* ———

Q. *Wherein did Christs Humiliation consist?*

A. ——*in His being born in a low Condition* ——— [Drop the Words, *and that* ———]

Q. *What are the Benefits which in this Life* ———

A. After, *Joy in the Holy Ghost*, add, [*The Ministry of good Angels for our good, and Succour against the Temptations of the Devils,*]

The most of these Hints are proposed by a Reverend and Eminent Servant of GOD, now with old *Simeon*, daily waiting to be dismissed unto his everlasting Rest; My venerable Uncle, Mr. *Solomon Stoddard*: unto which Another has added one or two more; That so every Pastor may with his People consider, Whether they would chuse to have printed for their particular Use, *The Catechism agreed on by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, according to the New-English Edition of it*: or satisfy themselves with an *Occasional Mention* of their Sentiments upon these Articles.

that they will Retire, and seek and cry to GOD, for such and such *Blessings* as we may shew them the *sanctifying Truths* do point unto?

But then, Our *serviceable Visits* to the Neighbourhood! Tho' our *Time* is to be by far the most of it, *spent Alone*; *separating* our selves that we may *intermeddle with all Wisdom*: Yet we should have our *visiting Time*; And our *Visits*, how, how *many* may we make, and how *much*, to be gainers, by what we shall communicate better than the *choicest* Silver in them! 'Tis pity that we should ever give any *personal Visits*, tho' never so much for meer *Diversion*, without something of a Purpose and Concern to *do Good* in them, and let fall something or other, that our Friends may be the *Wiser* or the *Better* for: Something or other, wherein our *Tongue* may be a *Tree of Life*, unto the Company. Rarely let us come into any Company, without some Thought, *May I do no Good before I go?* Never be so *Facetious*, much less be so *Ludicrous*, as to lose the *Gravity*, which may graft some *useful Maxim* on what we have been speaking of.

But then, there are the *pastoral Visits*, which are to be made on the pure Designs of *knowing the state of the Flock*, and suiting it with Admonitions, *Exhorting* and *Comforting* and *Charging* EVERY ONE, *as a Father does his Children, That they should walk worthy of* GOD: So *warning* EVERY MAN, and *Teaching* EVERY MAN, *that we may present* EVERY MAN *perfect in* CHRIST JESUS. Blessed Apostle; Must *Every one* be look'd after so! In this our *Visitation*, we shall have *Opportunities* to make all the *Applications*, which

which a *Timothy* is to make, that he may *save himself, and them that hear him*; And from the *Epistles* to him, and his Brother *Titus*, O thou *Man of* GOD, be thou *thoroughly furnished* for the *good Work* before thee. I am sure, This is an Advice which an *Austin* would vehemently have inculcated. So shall we be, (as others of the Ancients expounded that Expression *Job*,) the *Thick Clouds*, which have the *Water bound up* in them, and thence distil it in Drops, *Juxta Exigentiam Auditorum*. We shall find *Elder* Persons, whom we may with pungent Awakenings Instruct how to *Finish well*: And *Younger* Persons, whom with Heart-melting Tenders of Grace we may *Espouse* unto their SAVIOUR. We shall find the *Poor*, whom we may Encourage to *Trust in the Lord, and do Good*, and make sure of being *Heirs* to the *promised Kingdom*; Yea, and actually showre our *Alms* upon them: So getting their *Promise* to *mind* and *do* what we *say* unto them: And the *Rich*, whom we may *Charge* and *Charm* to be *Rich in good Works*; Yea, and mention to them & concert with them, the Things wherein they shall become *good Stewards of the manifold Grace of* GOD. We shall find Christians of *different Attainments*; and, alas, many that are *yet in their Sins*; To all of which we are to give the most *adaped Counsels*. We shall find the *Widow* and the *Orphan*, whose *Hearts* we should *make to sing with Joy*: The *Bereaved* with whom we shall sit as the *Comforters of the Mourners*; And such as are exercised with many sorts of *Troubles*, whom we may *Comfort by the Comfort wherewith we our selves are comforted of* GOD. The

Hand-

Handmaids of the Lord, near an Hour of *appointed Sorrows*, whose *Hearts* being *made soft* by their *approaching Sorrows*, will be more likely to receive what we shall offer, that they may be *saved in Child-bearing*, or found ready for all Events: Those also that *endure a great Fight of Temptations*, to whom we are to bring Succours from Him that knows how to *succour the tempted*. Finally, we may find some who *walk disorderly*; and these we are to *Reprove, Rebuke, Exhort, with all Long-suffering and Teaching*. For these Purposes, what if after we have discoursed with our Neighbours, we should leave *Books of Piety* in their Hands, that we may be *still discoursing* with them, after we are *departed* from them? Truly, By the *Expence* of a few Pence, it may be so, that we shall *save a Soul from Death*! Yea, so armed, as with *Iron and the Staff of a Spear*, we may board the veriest *Children of Belial* in the Town, with Necessary, and yet Inoffensive *Reprehensions*. O Thou *Man of* GOD, *Watch thou in all Things; Do the Work of a* Minister; *Make a full Proof of thy Ministry*.

But all PROPOSALS to a *Good Soldier of* JESUS CHRIST, must have this for ever annexed; *Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit*. Sirs, If you would be *Men of* GOD, you must be *Men of Prayer*; Your *Work* must all be carried on with *Prayer*; You must never be off your Knees. Yea, you must be no strangers to *whole Days of Prayer*. I beseech you, to become well versed in all the *Christian Ascetics*; wherein especially, *whole Days* devoted unto Communion with GOD, make a considerable Article.

They that have been most Eminent for *Fasting* alone, have been most Eminent for *Feeding* of multitudes. Verily, such *whole Days*, leave a serious, cautious, composed, and Heavenly *Savour* on the Mind, and produce tho' a very *lowly Mind* of one always *lying in the Dust*, yet a certain *Grandeur of Mind*, in those that are used unto them. Such *whole Days* keep alive the *Dispositions* of Men *set apart for GOD*, and carry on that *Conversation in Heaven* that will make such Men to be what they ought to be. Such *whole Days* will fetch down all sorts of *Blessings* upon, and render your uncommon *Blessings* unto, those whom you are to bear upon your Hearts continually. *A successful Ministry*, will be a *main Thing* in these *Days of the Lord*, asked for: And verily, *worth* being asked for. Who can tell the *Consequences!*

Finally, *So Foolish and Ignorant was I*, some Years ago, that if I had been *Then* to have treated upon SERVICE, I should have ended *here*; I should have thought there would not have been any need of saying *any more*. But the Experience of *Six times seven Years* in public SERVICE has taught me otherwise.

I take notice, that our SAVIOUR having said unto the Angelical Pastor of *Thyatira*, *I know thy SERVICE*, [What should now follow, but, *I know thy Esteem, thy Applause, thy grateful Reception in the World, the plentiful Remunerations made unto thee!* No, Not a Word of *This*: But] He presently says, *And thy PATIENCE*. It seems, that after we have done all the SERVICE that can be done, there will be wonderful Trials of our

PA-

PATIENCE found among, *The Things that are appointed for us.* We are not so *vain* as to *Dream*, That *Services* will excuse us from *Sufferings*. Truly, *after we have done the Will of* GOD, and after we have done a World of Good, *we shall have need of Patience.* And now, *Patience must have its perfect Work*, and be the *perfecting* of the *Work* to be done in us and by us, for our GOD. Be our *Services* never so various, never so multiplied, never so well-deserving, we must *endure the Contradiction of Sinners*; [*Have ye forgotten* who did so?] Nay, The more for *That*! And we had need be *strengthned from the Glorious Power* of our SAVIOUR, *unto all Patience and Long-suffering, with Joyfulness.* The most *serviceable Men* in the World, and Men *of whom the World is not worthy*, shall be maltreated as Men that *are not worthy to live* in the World.

There are *strange Humours* to be met withal. Yea, the *strange Humours* of many who will be reputed our *Godly Brethren*, will create such Trials for our *Patience*, as we could never have imagined. The *Devil* also, being by *the wrath of God, the Prince of this World*, and having by the *Divine Permission* an unaccountable *Operation on the Children of Disobedience*, yea, and upon some that we may not count the *Children of the wicked one*, a Man of great *Services* must not wonder at it, if he undergo great *Revenges* from the *Devil*, for the *Damages* which the *Kingdom of Darkness* may undergo from him. Can you *bear*, My Brethren, can you *bear*, as well as *do*, for your Glorious LORD? You can't be *Pillars in the Temple of your* GOD, if you can't *bear* very *heavy Things* impo-

fed upon you. Can you *bear* the vileſt *Ingratitude*? Can you *bear* the baſeſt *Miſconſtruction*? Can you *bear* the Javelins of *Envy*? *Bear* heaps of Indignities; The *Tongues* of Serpents, and the *Quills* of Porcupines? Yea, If the worſt Thing you do for the People be only to ſave their Lives from the tremendous *Deſtroyer*, For THIS very Thing [O *perpetuam — Infamiam!*] they will ſeek to *Deſtroy* and *Murder* you.

Our Glorious LORD in much *Faithfulneſs* orders it, that very *ſerviceable Men* ſhall often meet with ſuch Things as will cauſe them to ſay, *My* GOD *will humble me.* If GOD *Honour* them, He will alſo *Humble* them! And, Syr, If at any Time you are going thro' any *ſpecial Services*, you muſt *Then* eſpecially look to have your Spirit broken with ſome *Grievous Macerations*: Either to be enfeebled with *Diſtempers*, or to be outraged with *Obloquies*, or, (which is the *hardeſt of all!*) to be buffeted with *Internal Conſternations*. 'Tis, that you may be *Nothing*, and that the *Power of* CHRIST may be magnified in your *Infirmities*. In the midſt of your *Triumphs*, your Faithful SAVIOUR will find Thoſe, [You know the *Ayrien Cuſtom* I allude unto!] that ſhall *Whiſper* to you, yea, *Clamour* to you, the Things that ſhall call you to *perpetual Self-Abaſements*. That Excellent Perſon, whoſe *Works* alone, would make a *compleat Store-houſe for a Divine*, I mean, the great *Voetius*, does wiſely put upon theſe Things, the Denomination of, *Salubria Miniſtrorum Medicamenta*. There is an unknown *Mercy* ſhown unto you, in the many Things that *hide Pride from you*, and bring your

Patience

Patience into an Exercise, which the Eyes of Heaven do with Satisfaction look down upon. O thou *Green Olive-tree* in the *Proseucha* of thy GOD, Hast thou not read concerning the *Beating of the Olive-tree*? An *Olive-tree*, that would be a *Fruitful* one, must be a *Beaten* one. So, a *Paul*, dear to Heaven, and full of Heaven, must have a *Thorn in the Flesh*; which, I suppose to have been, in the *inveterate Prejudice* with which the *Judaizers*, even the *Christian Judaizers*, did for ever persecute him, and from which his *Opportunities to do Good* had fatal Obstructions and Abridgments upon them. A Soveraign LORD would not Remove this *Incumbrance*, but would have him look on the *Grace* that had been shown him on other Accounts to be *sufficient* for him, and be *Content* with such *Opportunities to do Good* as he had been other ways *favoured* withal. Tis, that he might not be *exalted above measure*, and exposed unto the Displeasure of Him, who does *Resist the Proud*, and even *know them afar off*, tho' their high Conceits of themselves, ly never so *far off* conceled in them. These *Humiliations*, which are the Trials of your *Patience*, will qualify you for the Things, that are anon to be done for you, when you shall find the *GOD of Patience* to be the *GOD of Consolation*: Yea, to be done for you, in the Recompences of the *Future State*, when your *tried Faith* and *Patience* will be *found unto Praise and Honour and Glory, at the Appearing of* JESUS CHRIST. You are aware, who said, *Certe si hominibus Servissem, mala mihi merces persolveretur*,— But, Syrs, What you meet withal, does but the more

Assure

Assure you of a *Future State*, wherein, — *my Judgment is with the Lord, and my Reward is with my GOD.*

In the mean Time, Oh, Be so *Patient*, as to hold on bravely doing of your *Duty* to them, who may be very grosly failing in their *Duty* to you. Be so *Patient*, as to Forgive and Forget the blackest Injuries, and be *not overcome of Evil, but overcome Evil with Good.* Be so *Patient*, as cheerfully to *Endure* all the *Difficulties* which in your *Warfare* you may be called unto. If after all your *Services*, you must be *Men of Sorrows and acquainted with Griefs*; if also, *Despised and Rejected of Men*; Be not only *Patient* but also *Joyful*, in your *Fellowship* with your SAVIOUR, and in the *Joy set before you.*

If it should be suggested unto your Minds, That your being *swallowed up with continual Services*, and even *consumed* in your *Zeal to do Good*, will bring abundance of *Humbling*, yea, and of *Killing*, Things upon you, which you might escape, if you would abate your *Services*, and jog on at the *common Rate*, and in the *common Road*, of them that have a *more easy Time* of it, and be more of the *Sluggard* that counts himself *Wiser* than the more *serviceable Men*, that *can render a Reason* for what they do; Retund and Repel the Suggestion. *Be very Courageous*; and courageously Resolve, *I will yet study to be more Serviceable; and I will trust a Glorious CHRIST for my Defence and Support under all, and for a blessed Issue of all. Yea, if I may but serve a Glorious CHRIST, and have a CHRIST concerned for me, a CHRIST conversing with me, a CHRIST possessing*

of

of me; This is enough; I will not wish for any more.— O *serviceable Man*, Thy *Lot* will doubtless at the *End of the Days* be among the *Martyrs* of thy SAVIOUR. I shall say no more but this; *Thou mighty Man of Valour, The Lord is with thee!*

You are sensible, that a Sermon on that well-plough'd Common-Place *De Ministerio Evangelico*, has not now been endeavoured, nor a Repetition of, what has been offered in the *Lives* of about *Seventy Ministers* published in one History, and in the Characters of near *Twenty* more at several Times more separately published; and in the Treatise entituled, *Bonifacius*; besides diverse *Ordination-Sermons*; by the Hand that is now at the *Plough*. This Work I do with an unspeakable Consolation see superseded, not only by a Troop of Authors, even an *Host of GOD*, that have written upon the Subject of, *The Pastoral Care*, from the Days of *Gregory*, down to the Days of *Gilbert*, yea, and some every Year since the last that I mentioned; but also by a considerable Number among *our selves*; yea, of our most promising *Young Men*, [*Have not I raised up such Young Men, O ye Children of* New-England, *saith the Lord!*] whose well-prepared *Sermons of Probation*, at their own *Ordinations*, have passed the Press, to satisfy the People of GOD, that we have Excellent *Young Men*, who Study and Resolve their Duty, and are the *Rain-bows* of our Churches.

All that I have offered, has been a plain and short Collection of *Memorials for a serviceable Minister*, and *Goads given forth*, which, *Oh! may our great Shepherd bless with a desired Efficacy!*

FINIS.

of me; This is enough; I will not wish for any more.— O Perswadable Man, Thy Lot will doubtless at the End of the Days be among the Martyrs of thy SAVIOUR. I shall say no more but this; Thou mighty Man of Valour, The Lord is with thee!

You are sensible, that a Sermon on that well-ploughed Common Place De Ministerio Evangelico, has not now been endeavoured, nor a Repetition of, what has been offered in the Lives of about Seventy Ministers published in one History, and in the Characters of near Twenty more at several Times more seperately published; and in the Treatise entituled, Bonifacius; besides diverse Ordination Sermons; by the Hand that is now at the Plough. This Work I do with an unspeakable Consolation see superseded, not only by a Troop of Authors, even an Host of GODS that have written upon the Subject of, The Pastoral Care, from the Days of Gregory, down to the Days of Gilbert, yea, and some every Year since the last that I mentioned; but also by a considerable Number among our present Men of our most promising young Men, [Have not I invited up such young Men, O ye Children of New-England, Fair the Lord!] whole well-prepared Sermons of Probation, at their own Ordinations, have pulled the Press, to justify the People of GOD, that we have Excellent young Men, who Study and Resolve their Duty, and are the Rain-bows of our Churches.

All that I have offered, has been a plain and short Collection of Materials for a Serviceable Ministry, and Good given forth, which, Oh! may our great Shepherd bless with a effectual Efficacy!

FINIS.